The grammar schools in Queensland are secular and owe much of their philosophy, values and customs to their English grammar school heritage and to the tradition of the great public schools of England. Secondary schools in Queensland were non-existent before 1864, yet Sydney Grammar School had been founded by an Act of Parliament in 1854. In 1860, the first Queensland Parliament passed the *Grammar Schools Act*. Under the legislation, grammar schools could be established in any municipality where residents had subscribed £1,000. The government would subsequently double any amount raised by subscribers. As a result, in 1864, Ipswich Grammar School opened its doors to secondary school students for the first time.

Between 1863 and 1892, ten grammar schools were established throughout Queensland and are true grammar schools under the *Act*.

In establishing grammar schools in the new colony in Queensland, the curriculum often blended the liberal education of the grammar school heritage with the more practical needs of colonial life. Students often had to travel to England or to Sydney for their university studies before the establishment of the University of Queensland in 1909. In addition to preparation for university, students were groomed for the public service, and professional and business careers.

Grammar schools of today are schools of first choice for thousands of Queensland students. Since the early nineteen hundreds, grammar schools have educated successive generations of students who have gone on to occupy leading positions in the professions, government and business.

The establishment of the original public grammar schools in Queensland was seen as a pragmatic way to promote the expansion of secondary education at a time when the government itself could not afford the provision of secondary schools. At the same time it provided a choice for families who sought an alternative to education being offered by the religious denominations.